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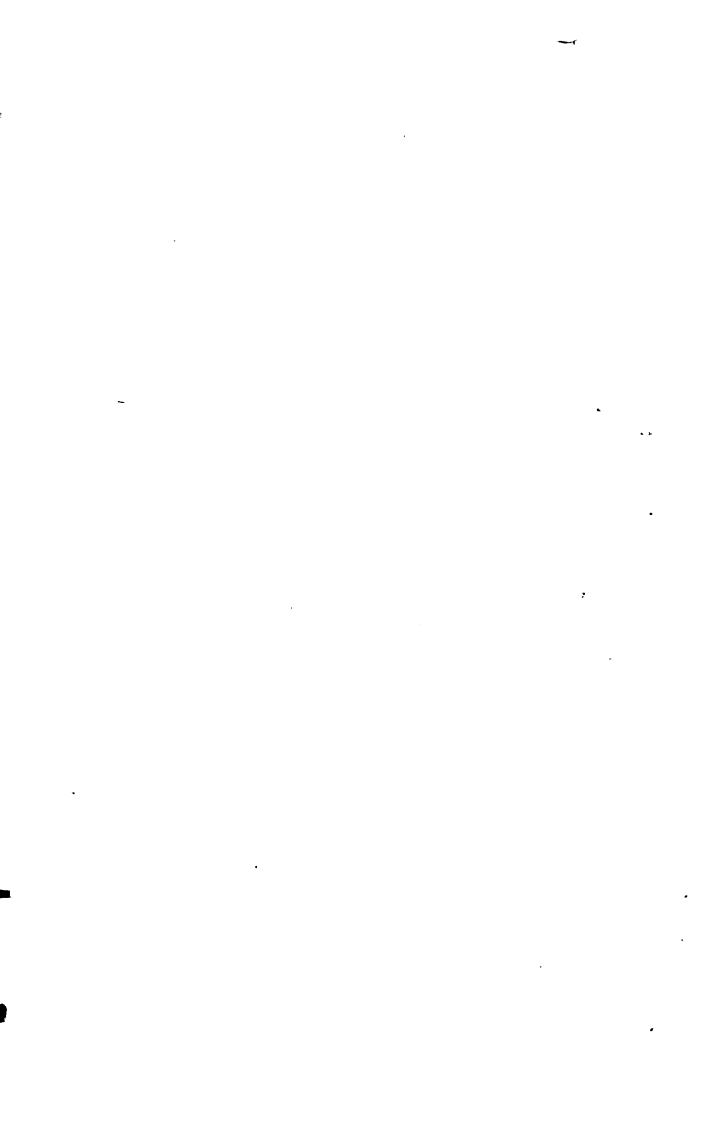


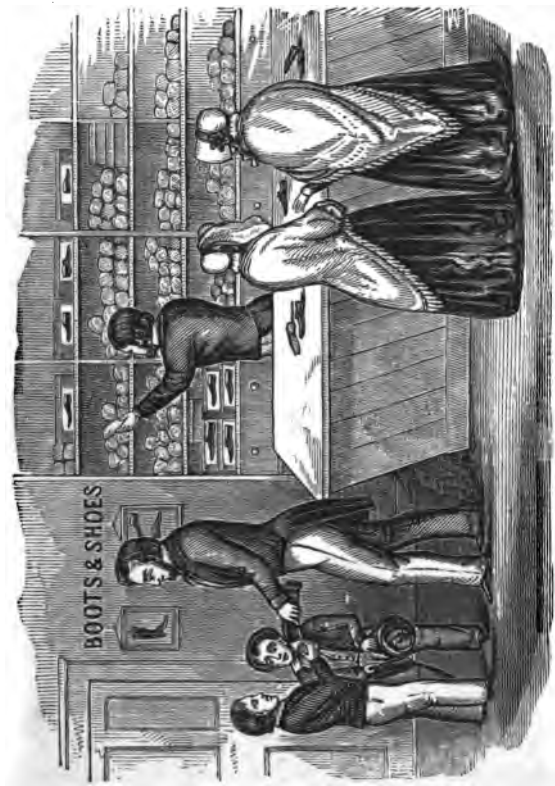


# Story of Himself.









PETER THE POOR BOY.—see p. 34.

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# STORY OF HIMSELF,

BY

PETER THE POOR BOY ;

OR,

FAITH, HOPE, AND CHARITY.

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BY MRS. MARY H. MAXWELL.

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*Written for the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society, and  
approved by the Committee of Publication.*

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## P R E F A C E .



OUR heavenly Father has provided a stronghold of consolation for those who trust in Him. The worldly-wise cannot discover this hiding-place from earth's storms, and windy tempests, because its vulture eye has never yet seen, and never *can* see what God has prepared for them that love him.

Even to the humblest, the poorest of this world, the gift to know God as their Father is freely offered, and this faith becomes to them as the munition of rocks; by it, bread is given unto them, and their waters are sure. Among the many instances daily furnished us of the sustaining power of Faith in God, we have selected one. It is but a simple story of believing effort, and we hope that it may be the means of opening the eyes of our young readers to trace the wonderful principle of Faith to its true fountain, and that drinking of those waters they may live forever.



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# STORY OF HIMSELF.

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## CHAPTER I.

### FAITH.

#### *The Small House.—The Poor Family.*

"I sat me down in earth's benighted vale,  
And had no courage and no strength to rise;  
Sad to the passing breeze I told my tale,  
And bowed my head, and drain'd my weeping eyes.  
But Faith came by, and took me by the hand;  
And now the valleys rise, the mountains fall,  
Welcome the stormy sea, the dangerous land!  
With *Faith* to aid me, I can conquer all."

My father and mother never told us that we were poor, and I can well remember the day on which we first found it out; and yet if any person in good circumstances could have peeped into our close quarters, he

would have wondered how we ever thought of any thing else but Poverty, pinching, sharp-nosed poverty. "Pray, where did you live?" asked Christopher, the curious boy. "You would not have easily found it," said Peter—"never would have stopped to look at the place a second time, I am sure, without you had lived, and almost died there. Curiosity is a weasel, I know, but curiosity would have found it hard to have squeezed himself into that narrowest of lanes, and that smallest of human habitations." "And yet, Peter, you were long in finding yourself poor." "Yes, we had always lived there in that little dot of a house, back of every thing; yet no city of vast wealth was ever more securely guarded than was this small house, of which few took note save ourselves. We had only to imagine ourselves of more importance than any body else, and here was every thing to favor the idea. We were surrounded by high brick walls, and in those walls were here and there a straggling window, made for convenience and not for show. Those

tall brick buildings, looking so finely in front, nobody but ourselves knew the secret of their back side appearance, and who were we? Why nobody, and living in well nigh nothing; and yet we did live, and some of us became green vines, which crept under, and clambered over those high walls, and came out into the world as though we had a rightful share in God's beautiful sunshine. There was Arthur, my eldest brother, he must have been long upon the shoe-bench with Father before I looked up from my little wooden cradle, and knew him as my brother, yet he was but six years my senior, and there was Grace and Albert between. When years had passed away, and another bench had been made for Albert and me, there was a pretty one who sat upon the floor and threaded needles for mother and Grace, and rocked the boy-baby in the cradle. Father never told us of a fair green home in the country, once his own, and mother never hinted that she had seen the sun through a long summer day,—that her cheek so pale and wan



now, was once rosy with air and light. We children could not have believed that our mother was ever more beautiful, and as for sunlight and flowers, we knew but little of them. 'Rap, tap, tap,' sang our father's hammer from daylight to nightfall, and the long waxen thread in the busy needles replied, 'So we do, so we do.' Save this we had but little song. Father coughed sometimes. It was a sharp, hollow cough, which always brought a sigh from mother as she looked up sadly from her work. But we children knew not the interpretation of either the cough or the sigh; they were among the few familiar sounds of our childhood,—we understood not that they had a deeper meaning than the busy 'rap, tap' of the hammer, or the dreamy 'so we do' of the needle. Once in a while, we heard a beautiful sound of gushing melody, but the 'rap, tap, tap' would then fall quick and sharp, and our mother's notes would quiver and die away." "Your father did not love music," said Christopher." "My father had no Faith," said

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Peter, "and this was why he could not endure the song of Hope; we learned this in after years." "And how long did you live so?" inquired Christopher. "O, forever, as it might seem, but it was not, for there came a time when the hammer sang faintly, and the sharp, hollow cough, was a sound more frequent. *Tears* are better interpreters than words, so at last they gave a revelation to us little children. We had no means of measuring time; much is spent in counting minutes, but we had no minutes, at least we knew of none, no, nor of hours. Our lives were not of days and years, but only of day and night, and each day was the same day, and each night was the same, until a strange visitor came and told us that time had been wearing away.

## CHAPTER II.

## FAITH PINIONED.

*The Prompt Stranger.—The Church-yard.  
The Revelation.—Faith and Knowledge.  
Faith and Try.*

“Thou hast a solemn power, O Death!  
Earth's treasures are thine own.”

It was Christmas eve, on which Peter, once known as “Peter, the poor boy,” told us this story of himself. Christopher had taken the elbow-chair, and now called on Peter for the name of the strange visitor, spoken of in the last chapter. Peter replied with a solemn air, “that it was Death.” “No great stranger to the world,” said Christopher. Peter looked thoughtfully into the fire, for a time, and then continued his story. “I have learned that, Christopher, learned it since I became acquainted

with the world; but death was a stranger to us children, and he came to us, for the first time, at a strange hour, for it was midnight when mother and Arthur sat beside our father's bed, and waited his coming, while Albert and myself clung tremblingly to Grace, who leaned upon the bed, and hid her pale face in her hands. Yet Death is prompt in his appointments," and Peter looked earnestly at the group around the evening fire. "He came to us at the hour he had long meant to come, and we all sat patiently, only, now and then, a long deep sigh, and a gush of tears told that we knew him as he passed, and wherefore he had come. From that night we were fatherless, and our mother a widow. The next day brought our new revelation. We were poor." "Any poorer than you were before?" asked Christopher. "O yes," and Peter spoke half smilingly, "a great deal poorer, for we found it out. I will tell you how. From the high windows of the brick walls barricading our small house, there had been 'lookers out.'

The printer had paused with a type between his fingers, and looked down upon the little black speck in the rear. So had the tailor, the turner, the cabinet-maker, and the mantua-maker, and all these eyes had seen something that told of *death*. Now, who would not think that death were a stranger to our world, a visitor rarely seen? Just as though it were harder for the poor to die than to live; but so mankind seems to think, for when after years of loneliness, of tugging, wasting poverty, death came to us, giving our father wings to scale those high brick walls, men and women came, for the first time, to our lonely house, to *console* us, and to say to each other in our hearing, that we were poor—oh, very poor indeed. Still we children might not have known what it meant, if we had not followed our father through the narrow lane, walking two by two after our mother, who held sister Grace by her cold little hand, and whispered her not to weep, for father was better off. Surely,

thought I, looking upon the beautifully shaded streets, the lofty mansions, and the arched gateways, with a feeling new and strange, our father has gone to live in a place like this; then he ~~is~~ better off, for he will have the warm sun to shine upon him through the long day, for mother says that there is no night there. So I walked along with a glad step, feeling as though I had part in a jubilee. But, brother Albert was not thinking of the spirits' paradise; he could imagine none greener or more beautiful than the one wherein they had made our father's grave. "We are poor, dear mother, we are poor," said Albert, when we were again shut into our speck of a house, with never a ray of light, nor a green leaf, nor a spire of grass to smile upon its loneliness. "Are we poor, mother?" asked Arthur; and mother, laying her wan cheek upon his bright hair, answered, "No!" "We have no sunshine, no green thing, nothing, are we not poor, dear mother?" said Grace. Mother was silent for a

few minutes, looking affectionately upon the group of earnest, sorrowing faces gathered around her chair. Then she said, softly, "I have four little boys and two little girls, am *I* poor?" "No, mother," replied Albert, "not if we are good boys and girls, and we mean to be, don't we?" All nodded assent; "and," continued mother, "my little boys and girls have *me*, are *they* poor?" No, no, we all answered with one voice so full and strong, that we awaked the boy in the cradle, who, holding up his fat little hands to mother, showed plainly that he considered her greater wealth than gold. Mother took him into her arms, and we sat down as near her as we could get, for night came early to us, and, now, as the dark shadows crept stealthily over the dull old walls of our house, we children felt a kind of fearful loneliness. Our father's sharp, hollow cough, would have been a relief to us, so would one of his heart-consuming sighs, they were sounds so familiar—even a groan of distress, any thing to

break the awful stillness gathering over our dark old house. I gazed timidly towards the narrow closet, once our father's sick room, the door was ajar, and as the night-breeze came in at the broken window, it creaked moaningly upon its rusty hinges. I wished that Arthur, or Albert, or Grace would close that door, but a glance at each told me that they would be glad if I would do it myself. This seemed a thing impossible. Mother was lost in thought, while the baby, resting upon her bosom, had fallen asleep again, and Eva was nodding in Arthur's arms. Darker, gloomier grew the shadows upon the wall, and deeper, heavier the weight upon our young spirits, until a sigh burst from Arthur,—a sigh so bitter, so like our father's,—that mother started as from a dream. She laid the little one tenderly into his cradle, and then, as the evening was chill, she lighted a small fire in the broken old fire-place, closed the creaking, moaning door, drew out the little pine table, and bringing from the shoal



cupboard in the corner our evening meal, she said cheerfully, "Come, my children, let us eat our suppers;" then, as we took our places at the table, she continued, in a cheerful tone, "I will tell you of something, my darlings, worth a fortune to a family like ours. It is Faith. Do you know what I mean, Arthur?" "What will it do for us, mother?" asked Arthur, without raising his eyes. "Whatever we will," replied mother, "and tomorrow, please God, we will see what Faith will do for you, my son!" Arthur was silent, but turned pale, and seemed suddenly to have lost his appetite. "Yes," replied Albert, slowly, "father is dead, and Arthur is our eldest;" but Arthur only sighed again, and the language of that sigh was this: "What am I, to be left with such a charge?" Poor Arthur had no Faith. When father sat upon the shoe-bench through the long day, even though, day by day, his 'rap, tap, tap' became fainter and fainter, the boy had something whereon he could lean, and that something, though

but the shadow of a man, stood in the stead of Faith, but now it was gone, and Arthur saw not what had come in its place. But mother's faith saw One, the angel of whose presence is promised to the widow and the fatherless. So she smiled hopefully, and when she sung that night, the notes of her song did not quiver as in other days, and I could not tell what made me feel so glad." "No wonder," said Christopher, "that your gladness was strange to you, your father being dead, and you so poor." Peter thought awhile, and then answered, "Yes, but when Death came and took our father, it left a young green plant in our dark old house; and when this plant was grown to a 'great tree, so that we could lodge in its branches,' we saw what came of faith like a grain of mustard-seed. Now, it only lifted the shadowy folds of care from our young hearts, and made us glad. This was the case with all except Arthur, with him Faith was nothing, he did not believe in its power to do for us whatever we would.

That night after father's funeral, I dreamed of Faith, but found that it was no fairy. It did not build for me a beautiful palace while I slept, for, on opening my eyes the next morning, I saw the same dim light stealing in at our low windows, the same row of half-bottomed chairs standing against the bare walls, but the best table was gone; it had been sold with every other whole piece of furniture, which our poor house afforded, in order that we might give our dear father a decent burial. The pine table was left, but its legs were very slender, and had a way of bending in, as though it was tired of standing, poor thing! But our frugal morning meal could not have been a burden even to the weak pine table. "How will Faith help us, mother?" inquired Arthur, as he rose from his breakfast, and, sitting down in the baby's cradle, folded his hands over his knee. "Not in that way," replied mother, "Faith will never help anybody in that position, you must get up and stand upon your feet, my

son, for Faith must have our feet, and head, and hands; we must lend them cheerfully, or it will do nothing for us. There, that is right, stand up, and unfold your hands; now, take Peter, and go to Market-street. Tell your father's employers that he is dead, and you are your mother's eldest boy." "O, mother!" exclaimed Arthur, "they won't, I *know* they won't employ me. You don't know them, mother, they are very stern; they have found fault, sometimes, even with father's work. I can't go to them, I never can do their work," and Arthur sank back into the cradle. "Alas, for us, then," said mother, "if we have not faith enough to *try*. The poor little brothers and sisters must starve." Arthur started to his feet again. "I *will* try," said he, "come Peter, get your hat—you haven't any—well, do as we did yesterday, take mine, and I will wear father's, but come quick." We passed hastily through the narrow archway, and were in the open street. "Pray tell us, Peter," said Christopher, "had you

faith." "No," replied Peter, "I had only joy. There was no heavy burden upon my young heart, the little brothers and sisters were not resting upon my feeble arm, and so I saw no cloud of want upon that morning sky—and oh, it was blessed to walk under the light of that sky! It was pleasure seldom tasted by us. Moments to the industrious poor are quite too precious to be used in sauntering beneath a clear sky. We children had been early taught to content ourselves with a few moments' play in the narrow yard, or, at most, a short run beyond the archway. None of us, save Arthur, knew much of the world beyond the street bounding this archway. But the pressing need of what little *work* we could do, was not the only reason for this strict seclusion.

"Our father, poor man, had a secret which he would gladly have kept from us. It goaded him night and day, and made the wounds of which he died. Mother was in this secret, but it was not a thorn to her,—

faith converted it into a plant of better growth. Arthur, too, was in this secret, and mother saw, that when youthful hope, which is but a short-lived flower, should cast its leaf, this secret might be to our eldest brother what it had been to father, a rankling, fatal thorn. So she strove hard to plant in his poor little faithless heart a scion from her own heart's tree—that tree was faith. Mother knew its gift of healing. It had long been to her the 'tree of life.' " "Were you in this secret," asked Christopher, the curious boy, "pray tell us what it might be." "You know it already," said Peter. "We were poor." "O, yes," replied Christopher, somewhat disappointed, "and how long did your father expect to keep that thing a secret?" "O, until the revelation would not be too great a burden to our young spirits. Our father had no faith, but he had a heart full of delicate love. He would not allow us to mingle freely with other children for fear that they would jeer at our poverty. He would not allow us to wander far from our dismal

home to look at the beautiful, either of nature, or of art, for fear we should faint and sicken at our own lot. Mother advised a different course ; she would have taught us faith, and hope, and love from this very contrast, and brought us with fervent gratitude to thank God for the sunlight, and the rain, bestowed equally upon the just and the unjust—for the lovely flowers, which deny not their fragrance to the smell, nor their beautiful tints to the sight of the poor. But father said that a blight had come upon Arthur's young life from too early and sharp a contact with a cold, unfeeling world, and if he were permitted to claim one boon from heaven, it should be this,—that his other children, when he could no longer shield them from the world's scorn, might find protection in the grave.

“ Mother knew that he might claim from heaven for himself and his children a better boon than that,—even the power to endure patiently, even *joyfully*, but she would not weary him with what was so far beyond his faith, she would not cross

his sickly whims, or contradict the feverish notions of a suffering brain. She knew that nothing was impossible to faith like hers, so she waited patiently for God's time, and that time had come. Our poor suffering father had gone to his grave, and as mother believed, had awaked to a joyful surprise in finding himself forever free from sorrow and care. Now, mother's faith had no weight upon its buoyant wing, and with me it was omnipotent. And, on that fine morning, while Arthur walked silently, thoughtfully along, I opened my heart to the warm sunshine, and could have raised my voice, and shouted in concert with every voice in the street. Arthur, on the contrary, seemed to consider all the bustle and gayety of that glad morning as an especial insult designed for him. He turned out of his way, and walked rapidly down a retired court, that he might not meet two young men who were walking arm in arm, and laughing merrily. He crossed, and re-crossed the street, that he might avoid the light-hearted



boys who trundled their hoops, and shouted to each other as they passed; and when a gay young girl flitted past us, and accidentally brushed him with her parasol, he colored deeply, and murmured to me, that had it pleased heaven to make a lady of our sister Grace, she would have been other than that. This was strange to me; I had never seen my sober, gentle brother in such a humor before, and then I felt so differently. It seemed to me that I could walk a long way with that pretty little girl even at the risk of having my hat fairly whisked from my head. But I have since learned the nature of Arthur's malady. It was too much care. It hung upon his spirit like a dark pall, and mother's faith was not sufficient to lift its heavy folds, and let in the light of heaven. "I cannot go in, Peter," said Arthur, as we stood before a broad door, above which a ponderous sign bore in gilded letters the names of Coleman, Clark & Co.

"You see Peter, that it is crowded with

customers, how can I speak out before them all, and say that father is dead, and I am his eldest boy? What if they should laugh, Peter, just think of it. You and I standing there to be laughed at because our father is dead, and we are poor," and Arthur's face colored again, with that same deep, half-grieved, half-angry flush that it did when the pretty girl whisked his hat. "We will go in," said I, feeling for the first time in my life that I was stronger than my elder brother, "away at the farther end, Arthur, close to that glass door, is an empty space, there we can wait until some of these people are gone." I took my brother by the hand and he allowed me to lead him to the standing place by the glass door; but while his hand was in mine, I noticed that it was cold almost as marble. Once or twice a dark-eyed, severe looking man came near where we stood, and I whispered Arthur to speak, but he would shrink back, and say, "That is *Coleman*, he is the cross one. I had rather speak with

Clark." This Clark was a younger man and he *did* look much the best natured. He was behind the counter smiling graciously upon a host of ladies; but these customers seemed far from concluding their bargains. We were tired of standing, and Arthur thought we had better go home, and wait until the next day. Just at that moment Mr. Coleman came to the end of the counter near which we were standing, and in a voice which seemed harsh and ungracious, even to me, said, "What are you wanting here, boys?" Arthur clenched my hand more firmly in his, and turned away his head. I replied in a half whisper, "Our father is dead, Sir." Mr. Coleman handed a boot to a customer who was waiting, and then coming nearer to us, he spake in a lower, and much kinder tone, "Are you Prescott's boys?" "Yes, Sir." "Do you say that your father is dead?" "Yes, Sir." "When did he die?" "Friday, Sir," said I, "and was buried yesterday." Mr. Clark now came near where

we were standing. "Poor Prescott is dead," said Mr. Coleman, "these are his boys." "Ah, indeed!" said Mr. Clark in a very sympathetic voice, but he did not look at us, he took down a case of dancing slippers, and in a few moments was laughing and joking with the ladies. Mr. Coleman too, walked away, and talked with the man who was trying the boots, but he came back presently and asked us if our mother had any way by which she could support her family. "Arthur is our eldest," said I, but Arthur looked steadily out into the street. "Have you worked with your father, Arthur?" asked Mr. Coleman. "Yes, Sir," replied Arthur clearing his throat, "ever since I can remember." "And do you think that you could make a shoe?" Arthur was silent, but I replied, "There is no mistake about it, Sir, my brother can do any thing that he *tries* to do." "So can *any body*," said Mr. Coleman, "except they try to build a ladder to the moon." "Mother says that faith can build a ladder to heav-

en," said I, beginning to feel very well acquainted. Mr. Coleman smiled, and went into the back shop, returning presently with a small package which he gave to Arthur. "There," said he, "if you do those well, we will provide you work as we did your father. You are a small boy to be sure, but your father was a good workman, and your mother has *faith*, I think that we may trust you." "So faith has done something for us," said I, capering along home. "If faith was a shoemaker," replied Arthur, "I would soon scrape acquaintance with him, but I am afraid that you and mother wont get him upon the shoe-bench;" then he looked very sober, and said, "O Peter, I feel dreadfully about these shoes. I never made one alone you know." "But you can, dear Arthur," said I, "you had never '*cut*' until father was too weak to stand." Mother laughed at the high caper I cut when we got home, especially as I bumped my foolish little head against the low ceiling; then I told her what Arthur said about

Faith upon the shoe-bench. Mother said that if Faith were not a shoemaker, yet he would do as much for shoemakers as for any body else. She said, too, that all working people had some faith, or they could not work at all, and the more faith, the less toilsome their work. Albert was of opinion that people should have *great* faith. "Now," said Ally, "I have no manner of doubt as to Arthur's making those shoes." "I have not," said mother smiling, "but if we spend all our faith upon Arthur, we shall have none for ourselves. I should like to know how much each of you believes for himself. Peter, my son, what do you believe that you can do?" This was rather a home question. I now began to see that it was easier to have faith for Arthur than for myself. "Why," said I, "you know that I can *close*." "O yes," said mother, "I have known that for two years, and so have you; I did not ask what you *know* but what you *believe* that you can do." At this I felt something manly

stirring in my heart, and rising upon my feet I said, "I believe that I can *peg*." It is true that a timid spirit whispered to me, and said, "Why, Peter Prescott, isn't that a lie?" But I answered more vehemently, "I can mother, I do believe that I can *peg*." The other boys laughed, and mother asked Albert what he could do. "Why," said Albert, "if Peter is to be *pegger* I must look up some other business. I must do what Arthur did before he had father's work to do. I don't know, mother, but I can *try*." "You can *try*," said Arthur, "why I thought that you were the boy of *great* faith." "Well," replied mother, "Try is a very good friend to Faith. He is a nimble little fellow always trotting along beside Faith to help him. You seldom see one without the other. Faith can do nothing without Try, and Try would soon break his neck, or faint away without Faith. So now we will go to work and see if that is not true." The busy "rap, tap, tap," of the hammer, and the dreamy

'sq we do' of the needle was again heard in our —— I cannot call it *house*—there is some idea of space and comfort in the word *house*. Nor can I call it *cottage*, for then you will think of fresh dew upon morning flowers, and dew had no errand there. So it never came—never. I do believe that we saw the rain sometimes, but it never came with a clear, pattering sound to us. It dashed from the high slated roofs above, and formed many a muddy pool in our little yard of clay. Or it gurgled frantically through the long spouts, as if in agony to be free, but never fell softly from heaven, as though it were sent for us, and why should it? The rain had no more of an errand there than had the dew, for not a shrub, plant, or even a spire of grass asked water for a thirsty root.”

“But,” said Christopher the curious boy, “you have not as yet named your house, Peter. What if you were to call it a wigwam?” “No,” said Peter laughing, “that name is not appropriate. No Indian could



have breathed there. The red men who live in the glorious forest, and listen to the roar of the rocking pines, would die beneath those walls of unchanging red. I know they would, Christopher. But it was our home. It had always been mine, and Albert's. So I will call it home. God knows why he put us there, and after a time *we* knew. But it was a long time of believing effort, and cheerful hope."

## CHAPTER III.

## FAITH UPON THE SHOE-BENCH.

*The first trial. — The Conquest. — The week's work. — The prompt man.*

BEFORE that day was gone, that first day of Arthur's master-workmanship, he came to mother quite discouraged. "Dear mother," said he, "I have come to a place where I must stop." Mother did not look up from her work, but simply asked, what was the matter? "Why," said Arthur, "I have gone as far as I ever went upon a shoe, alone." "And as far as you intend ever to go?" asked mother. "O no, indeed," replied Arthur. Then mother looked up, and said, "Why then do you stop? Are you not strong enough to finish your shoe?" "Yes, mother." "Have you lost your eyesight, my son?" "No, ma'am." "What then is the matter, Arthur?" asked mother, smiling, "you know how it is done, do you

not?" "Yes," said Arthur, "I have seen father do it a hundred times, but *I* have never done it." Then mother said seriously, "Your father will never do it again, my child. You have now not only your own, but his work to do. You have done your own very well, now go to your bench, Arthur, and do your father's work." Our eldest brother made no reply; he looked sad, and there was evidently something saying to him, "You can't do it, Arthur Prescott, and what is the use of trying?" But there was a principle at work in Arthur's heart, that would not allow him to utter these discouraging words. He did not frown or jerk his shoe as though angry because it did not finish itself. He was sad, to be sure, but he looked kindly and respectfully at mother, while she was speaking, and in passing from her chair to his bench, stopped and kissed the little brother, who was crowing in the cradle. I know that mother felt at that moment that with all her poverty, she had something to be thankful for; and I know, too, that

from her very heart, she was thankful that though Arthur was fearful, and unbelieving, he was not a disobedient, rebellious boy. It was only a short time before he came to mother again, creeping slyly behind her chair, and holding a finished shoe over her shoulder. I had never seen my mother look so pleased before. I really think that she had a mind to kiss Arthur, but feared that it would make him less of a man; so she only said, "That is well done. My little boys can do what they *try* to do." "And can't your little girls, too?" asked the beautiful little Eva, who had been sitting upon the floor for more than an hour, threading needles, and rocking the baby. There was always an innocent joyousness in Eva's voice that made us glad. Father called her his Bird; and it was not until nearly all life and hope had waned from his heart, that he ceased to smile at her sweet prattle; but now we all laughed when Eva spoke, and mother shaking her white little hand, said, "Certainly, my little girls can do what they try; so can we

all, that is encouraging, is it not?" "Well," said Arthur, "I believe now that I can make a shoe; so mother, faith has come to the shoe-bench, after all." Mother shook her head. "*Knowledge* has come to the shoe-bench," said she. "Arthur has tried, and succeeded, and now *knows* that he can make a shoe. If Faith lags along behind Try, he will lose his name, and Try will have a hard time of it. Try and Faith should jog patiently along together."

One week had passed away since father had been laid in his beautiful grave under the drooping trees, and Arthur had been left with his work to do. It was Saturday night, and we had all worked hard during the week, for there was something more to be paid on the coffin, and there was no hope but that it would be called for on this very Saturday night. We all knew creditors to be remarkably prompt; so, as I said before, we labored hard and had our work ready to be sent home at an early hour. Arthur was in much better humor than on his former visit to "Clark's & Coleman's."

The dear boy was beginning to think a great deal of Faith, and was sure that he had some, and as we went along cheerfully with our bundle of shoes, he told me in a low confidential tone what he meant to do for the family. "Mr. Clark is in, and is not engaged," whispered Arthur, joyfully, as he peeped in at the open door. We walked in, and laid our shoes upon the counter. Mr. Clark was reading a newspaper, he looked up however, nodded pleasantly, and telling a small boy who was in attendance to put the shoes into a draw, resumed his reading. We waited long. It must have seemed a very long time to my poor sensitive brother. I saw the color come and go in his pale thin cheek, and by hemming and stirring about, I tried to provoke another look from Mr. Clark. He bore my noise, however, with wonderful patience; keeping his eyes rivited on the paper for a full half hour, until coming to the end of the column, he looked up again, and asked if our *father* wanted any thing. "Father is dead," said Arthur, with that

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same forlorn look as though every thing in heaven and earth was dead too. "O yes, poor fellow," said Mr. Clark, and went on with his reading. It was getting dark, and for my own part, I was glad to see Mr. Coleman, but as he came towards us, Arthur shrunk back, and looked nervous. "Have you finished the shoes, boys?" asked Mr. Coleman. "Yes, sir," said I. "Where are they?" The boy pointed to the drawer where he had huddled them all together. Arthur now became very restless, for Mr. Coleman turned them over, closely examining the work; at last he came towards us with a shoe in each hand. Arthur turned pale, and I saw that his boasted faith had quite forsaken him. "You must be more careful of your corners," said Mr. Coleman, "they must look alike. Now you see in this shoe that the toe is nearly square; in the other it is much rounder." So saying, he pointed both shoes towards us, but being no connoisseur, I could not for my life have told which was the squarest, or which the roundest. Arthur looked vexed and dis-

couraged ; and as Mr. Coleman went out, whispered to me, that it was just as he expected, he knew that he should never be able to make shoes alone ; but it was all over with us now, they would not employ *him* again. I never shall forget the woe-begone expression of Arthur's countenance as he said this. The dear affectionate boy thought that by making one shoe a thought less pointed than the other, he had sealed the doom of his poor family ; but he afterwards learned that the good God takes better care of those who walk uprightly. Mr. Coleman soon came back to us with a bundle of a different kind, and asked Arthur if he could do them. " They are more difficult than the others," said Arthur. " That is true," replied he, " but they are more profitable. It is a particular kind of work, but you can earn nearly twice as much on these, and I am willing to trust you, if you would like to try." " I *know* you can do them, Arthur," said I. " I can *try*," said Arthur. " That's right," said Mr. Coleman, looking at him with a kind



of fatherly look, which Arthur did not notice, but which sent a warm comfortable sort of feeling to my heart. Mr. Coleman now stepped out, and Arthur was glad, for he didn't want to ask him for money. Mr. Clark had finished reading, and was now playing with a black kitten which crawled upon his shoulder and was putting her saucy little paws upon his whiskers. The boy was lighting up the shop lamps, and Arthur looking anxiously towards the darkened street, nerved himself to go and ask Mr. Clark if it would be convenient to pay us for our work that night. "O yes," said he, walking softly about, so as not to pitch Miss Tabby from his shoulder, and leisurely opening first one drawer, and then another, he looked as carelessly in all, and then told us there was no *change*, we could have it next Saturday. This was a great disappointment; it was *so* necessary for us to have it then, because it was *promised*. Mr. Clark, however, did not appear to notice our disappointment, he turned to the black kitten, and we left the store. "What

shall we do?" said I. "I don't know," replied Arthur. "I hate to go home without the money; mother will feel distressed about that debt, and then I rather think that we are out of provision." We now saw Mr. Coleman coming towards us, and I thought best to ask him for the money; but Arthur would not listen to any such thing; he said that he would as soon die as ask a favor of him. These were not my feelings, for notwithstanding all his coldness, and apparent severity, I felt great confidence and something like affection for Mr. Coleman. "You have taken the work I got for you," said he. "Yes, sir," replied Arthur, and Mr. Coleman was passing abruptly on, when stopping suddenly, he inquired if Mr. Clark paid us for our last week's work. I replied that he had not, he had no change. There was something like impatience in his manner, now, as he put his hand into his pocket, and drew out his purse. He put a bank note into Arthur's hand, but my brother offered to return it, saying that he could not change a

note. "No matter," said Mr. Coleman, "your mother must be in want of money now; your next week's work will make all square." So saying, he hurried on.

Arthur looked lovingly upon the note in his hand, and then he said, smilingly to me, "Mr. Coleman is a good, generous man; but Peter, why is it that I am so mortally afraid of him?" "I guess that he is,——" Here I was obliged to stop, for my vocabulary of expressive words was by no means large. "Guess he is mighty particular. Is that what you were going to say?" asked Arthur. I shook my head; there was a word floating in my brain which better suited the idea, but I could not fish it out; so walking silently along, we soon reached the old archway; then the miserly little clay yard. My hand was on the wooden latch when I heard mother singing,—

"His hand shall smooth my rugged way,  
And lead me to the realms of day,  
To milder skies, and brighter plains,  
Where everlasting pleasure reigns."

"Arthur! Arthur!" said I, in an earnest

whisper, "*don't* you love to hear mother sing?" "Yes," said Arthur, "I do to-night, because I have got some money for her." "Well," thought I, "mother will not sing any the better for that; she believes that God will take care of us, and I don't think she will feel any better when she knows it." And so it seemed; for when Arthur put the money into her hand, she only smiled quietly, and said, "What did I tell you, my son?" "O, but mother," said Arthur, "things are not so nice, after all; they have given me a harder kind of work to do." Mother untied the bundle. "Why, my dear," said she, "your father has done scores of this kind." Arthur said yes, he knew it; he had seen father make them, and knew how they were done, but was afraid to try himself, for he should certainly spoil them, and Mr. Coleman was so particular. "He is very—" said I; but that word was not to be caught. "Old maid-ish," said Arthur. "One thing is certain," replied mother, "Mr. Coleman is a man worth pleasing; and it is nothing to our

disadvantage that he is so very *prompt*." "That is the word," said I, "he is prompt; not 'old maidish,' nor 'mighty particular,' only *prompt*." Mother smiled, as she continued, "Mr. Coleman is evidently one who believes that people can do what they *try* to do; and he must have come to that faith in others, by having faith in himself. Perhaps Mr. Coleman when a little boy, learned the important fact that there is nothing really impossible, to those who believe, because true faith will *try*, and must succeed. I think, too, that he is one of those people who love best the *right* way of doing things. Doing things in a right way, and at a right time, is being prompt; and there is no gift, my children, that we should more earnestly covet, than this; promptness in right doing will enable us to do whatsoever we will. A prompt person never thinks that though a thing is not done just right, it will do; neither that any time will answer for doing a thing that has its own *right* time; but spending no time in fears that he shall not be able to do what

is important to be done, he stands to his post like a 'minute man,' ready to do with his might what his hands find to do."

"Well, mother," said Arthur, "when you talk about such people, you can make them appear very sleek, but when you come to *work* for them, they are great plagues, after all; because, mother, they are so hard to please." "That may be," replied mother, "but if we at last succeed in pleasing such a person, we may be sure that our own characters have improved, and there is great consolation in that. Much fault is found with particular people, but if they keep their hearts right, they are the kind of people most needed in the world, and we should be thankful for them. It is a kind Providence that brings careless, indolent persons, in contact with such. They may be a nettle to them, but it is better to be *stung* to action, than to allow life to rust out in idleness." "But, dear mother," said I, "you certainly do not mean *Arthur*, when you talk of idleness. I am sure that he needs no *stinger* to keep him to work."

"No," said mother, "Arthur has neither faith nor hope, but God has given him a principle stronger than either. I will not now call its name, but it is something that *constrains* him to do, and will nerve him to endure."

## CHAPTER IV.

## H O P E .

*The Life Preserver.—The Wilted Bud.—  
Hope folds its wing.—The Consulta-  
tion.—Heart-consuming Want.—The  
Priceless Promise.—Home in Prospect.*

“Hope is a pledge of glorious rest,  
To weary mortals given,  
A flower we cultivate on earth,  
To reap the fruit in heaven.”

MOTHER was not mistaken, and yet it puzzled me greatly to know what kept the spirit of Try alive in Arthur's heart. Poor boy, I often thought that he would give up. He would say that he must, that it was impossible for him to go another step; and he would fold his hands for a few moments, looking so forlorn. I am sure that your heart would have ached to have seen a fair



young boy so full of care." "I have no doubt of it," said Christopher; "pray tell us if you can what kept him from dying outright, for I am distressed——" "Curiosity will not kill folks," replied Peter, "if it could, you, my curious friend, would have been dead long ago. Be patient, you shall know the name of Arthur's 'life preserver,' all in good time. It was something that kept him at work, and for the most part patient; and something kept the rest of us at work, so that our hearts were the only losers in losing our father. We knew more of bodily comfort than when he was living; but there was another want revealing itself among us, a sad want to be unsupplied in a family like ours. Sister Grace was our heart's flower; a beautiful creature to bloom without dew or sunshine. Yet she had never dreamed of such a thing, how should she? If a bit of looking-glass half as big as a man's hand had been ours, she would have found it out, for she had a girl's heart—the little dear. But we had

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no such bit. Our mother told us when our faces were *clean*, but a word of their comeliness never was breathed. I thought that all girls were beautiful, that all looked and acted like my fair sister Grace; but Arthur did not, and he was the first to notice a change in her sweet face, and whispered it to me. I watched, and saw it too; and though he charged me not to distress mother, in my alarm I whispered it to her. Mother saw it quicker than I, but wondered that she had not seen it before." "What was the name of your sister's complaint?" asked Christopher. "We gave it no name." replied Peter; "the change in Grace was slight, at first; she had always been very white, a perfect lily blossoming in the shade, a little fairy too, with step so light. Our poor father never complained of her voice or her tread, though his nerves became so sadly shattered that he could hardly allow us boys to move or speak. But as I said before, he loved to have Grace near him, her soft little hands upon his own, so cold

and shriveled, or smoothing his long damp hair, and bathing his poor tired head. But now there was a change in Grace, for though her form was more shadow-like than before, her step was not so light. She walked slowly and wearily, and no longer sang at her work. We were hard-working children, and as such we loved the hour of rest. Our evening prayers were always closed in a dream, and if there was sin in that, I am sure that we were forgiven, and blessed while we slept; but dear little Grace came to love her poor hard bed less and less. She would rouse mother from her sleep to ask if the night was not far spent. When mother first asked Grace if she was sick, the dear child said, 'No, not really sick, mother, but—' then the tears came to her eyes, and she turned away as if unwilling to talk, but mother drew her upon her knee, and said, 'Tell me, my lily bud, what is the matter?' and Arthur left his work, and come putting his arm around his sister's neck, and begged her to

say why she could no longer eat, nor sleep, nor sing. 'Because,' said Arthur, 'if I cannot make you well, I am sure that I shall die.' Little Eva, too, laid her curly head lovingly upon her sister's arm, and said, 'Tell mamma what ail her lily bud.' Grace now tried to laugh, and said, kissing Eva over and over again, 'Mamma has a sweet healthy *rose bud*, and she had best let the poor silly lily bud go. But I will tell mother what makes me sick, though I am sure that it is wrong, and I am no longer a good girl. I have faith, mother, faith in you, and faith in God, I think. He will not let us starve; but I am tired—O, so tired of this dark lonely place—these high brick walls, and little dry yard, with nothing green, and no sunlight,—and mother, we are so poor that there is no hope of our getting away from here. I do not think so much of it for myself, mother, but you have been here for a long time, and it is dreadful that you must spend your days here. And then there is Arthur, and Peter,

and Albert; and there is our dear little Eva, mother, and poor little Bub in the cradle, *must* they always stay in such a place?' Here Grace burst into tears, and laying her head upon mother's shoulder, sobbed bitterly. 'My dear child,' said mother, 'I will not reproach you for these feelings, though they are wrong, for I see that you are sick; we must allow you a little rest, and a little recreation. We are getting along so nicely that we can afford a little time to walk; yes,' continued mother, in a very cheerful tone, 'we will all go this very night over to that pretty grave-yard, where your father sleeps, and bring back with us some of those sweet flowers.' Grace still rested her feverish cheek upon mother's shoulder, while the tears flowed over them most freely. 'Now don't cry any more, ducky,' said Albert, capering around the room, 'we will have *such* a good time.'

"Dear Mother," whispered Grace, "don't take me to walk in the church-yard, pray don't; for you know I have dreamed of it

every night since we left father there. And O there is such a longing in my heart to go there, and stay, that it would kill me to go and come back." "I expect," said mother, "that after we have believed, and tried, and endured a little longer our heavenly Father will give us a green flowery home." "Home in the country ! I know, Mother," said Grace, "that you talk of a home in the country, but I shall not see it. It seems a long way forward, and I get tired of looking for that beautiful grave-yard ! It is only a little way there ; when I can sleep at all, I dream that it is here." "Well," said mother, "you are a poor tired little girl, we will say no more of the grave-yard now. I have a pretty little book that you must read aloud to us, little by little as you are able, my daughter." So saying, mother went briskly about the house preparing our suppers, singing all the while a happy little song about Israel's Shepherd. After Grace was in bed that night, mother talked with us boys, and asked what was to be

done. Albert said, "that we must get Grace out to walk," but mother doubted her being able to walk. "I will tell you," said she, "of what I have been thinking, it is this,—If my boys will take hold in good earnest, I think that we may go into the country." "Into the country!" exclaimed Arthur, "why, dear mother, how, where, and when shall we go!" Mother playfully laid her finger upon his lips and said, "One question at a time, if you please, little Mr. Faintheart; first then, *how* shall we go,—my advice is that we go in the best way we can. Secondly, *where* shall we go,—that is not yet decided, perhaps it will be necessary to consult some friend in this matter; but as to the question *when*, I would say as soon as possible." "To hear you talk, mother," replied Arthur, "one would think that we had horses, carriages, and gold for our utmost need. We can but merely live *here*, just *live* if we are careful not to think a thought that will cost us money. We can never go out from

under these brick walls, we must live and die here." "Your father said so," replied mother, "and so he did." Albert wanted to know "if father had faith." "Alas, no," said mother, "and it was this heart-consuming want that killed him. He had neither faith nor hope, he said that it was our *destiny* to toil and never breathe the pure air of heaven; to die away by inches, till our hearts all cankered, and withered by care, should long for the grave as a place of rest. It was thus with him, poor man, he was bound by an imaginary chain, which he called his destiny, and though faith might flutter its wings, it had no power to burst this chain, and he could not bear that I should talk, sing, or even think of brighter days." "And pray, mother," said Arthur, "what is our destiny, if it be not to toil on as our father did, to work, work, work, without air or sunlight, and at last feel glad to die because the grave is the most beautiful place we have known." "And did God our heavenly Father shape



such a destiny for us?" inquired mother. Arthur supposed that he did, and therefore we should be content. Mother shook her head, she said "that we must all go the next day and see yet again how God clothed the grass, and arrayed the lilies, and then remember that we were in his sight more precious than they. 'Now my children,' continued mother, we have neither horses nor carriages, neither gold nor silver, but we have a promise better than all these,—It is this: 'No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.'"

"But, dear mother," interposed Arthur, "what are we to do? You talk of the country, but we have not the first cent to help us there." "And if we had," replied mother, "it would be but a weak and foolish thing to trust, and so would any amount, either of copper, or gold. By the providence of God, my son, I feel myself commanded to go. My children, if allowed to stay here, will die, as their father did. You know children, that there

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was one who went out at the command of God, not knowing whither he went, and his faith was accounted to him for righteousness. But it is getting late ; hard-working people like us must improve our time of rest." I remember the first words of my mother's prayer that night, they were these, " Lord increase our faith." And though I was but a little boy, I had learned to think of green fields, and fragrant flowers ; of blue skies, and morning dews, all beautifully linked to *faith*, so it was not wholly without understanding that I added a fervent Amen to this first petition of the evening prayer. Mother talked no more of the country for three days. Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, were long dark days, for it rained continually, not for us ; I have before told you that it had no occasion to rain for us, but the water splashed from the high dusty roofs, as it was wont to do, and left a thick dingy coat upon our low windows ; it leaped and gurgled in its pent up channels, and made a deep muddy pool around the

old pump, a poor desolate thing, that lurked in our tiny clay yard. Well, these were dark days. Grace looked worse and worse, but complained of nothing, only of being tired, O, so tired. Arthur worked silently as father used to do, only once in a while he would look at Grace, and then at mother, and then back to Grace again, until mother would notice it, and try to set little Eva to talking; but she, little dear, was sleepy more than half of the time, and felt inclined to cry the other half. Our longest days, however, pass away, and we should thank heaven for that. Thursday and Friday with their lowering clouds, and dull weary drizzle, were gone. So was more than half of Saturday. Our long week's task was nearly accomplished. Faith was not upon the shoe-bench, that was certain, but something was there, something very strong, stronger than death I think, or Arthur would have died; as it was, he toiled away, wearily to be sure, but patiently, and perseveringly. Mother

believed, and Albert and I hoped; O how much I hoped would come of my mother's faith. If poor little Grace could have hoped, she would not have drooped so rapidly during those heavy wet days; but this was the great want of her poor fainting heart. Hope had folded her wings upon the church-yard gate, it could not plume them for a farther flight, but was waiting, panting, and drooping there. The last stitch was taken in our long week's work, and mother had called Arthur and I into that little dismal closet where father died. When the door was closed, she asked if we had thought any thing more about getting our sister into the country, and what we intended to do. "What *can* we do, mother?" asked Arthur almost impatiently. "You can make some inquiry," replied mother, "we may obtain some information in this matter by *trying*, of course we shall not without." "Of whom shall we inquire?" asked Arthur, "what surety shall we give, and even if a house were found, and we had leave to

occupy it, how is such a family as ours to bear the expense of moving? Nothing can be done, dear mother," continued Arthur, trying to speak in a softer tone, "we must give it up,—there is no one of whom we can inquire except it be of Clark & Coleman. From what I have seen of Mr. Clark, I know that we should learn nothing of him; and Mr. Coleman has such crusty ways, mother, I am sure that I had rather stay here and die, than to say a word to him about a house." "And rather sister Grace should die?" asked mother seriously. Arthur started as though suddenly wounded; took his hat and the bundle of shoes, and without saying a single word, only motioning me to follow, he left the house. We walked in silence to the store. I felt greatly disappointed, but thought that Arthur was rather pleased that Mr. Coleman was not there. We laid our shoes upon the counter, and Mr. Clark as usual told the boy to put them away. Arthur then asked him "if he knew of any house a short dis-

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tance from the city which could be ——” here he stopped, and seemed aware that he was not doing his errand properly. It made no difference, however, to Mr. Clark. If there was any difficulty in getting out a whole question, he was quite as willing to answer half a one ; so he smiled, and gaped, and then told us very pleasantly that he knew of no house a short distance from the city,—none at all.” Mr. Coleman now came out from behind a ponderous desk, where it seems he had all this time been writing. Arthur started, and turned pale, as though he were a hypocrite, instead of the good, warm-hearted boy that he was. Mr. Coleman told the boy to bring back the bundle of shoes, he wanted to see how they were done. He seemed well satisfied as I thought, and I saw no reason why Arthur should stand wringing his poor fore-finger, as though he had made up his mind not to leave it in joint. Mr. Coleman examined the whole bundle, shoe by shoe, and said not a word, which silence was equal to

warm praise, for if there had been the tithe of a fault, he would have found it. At last he put them back into the drawer, while Arthur released his poor fore-finger, and drew a long breath. Mr. Coleman came along in his short way, telling Mr. Clark's black kitten to 'scat! and then asked what we were saying about a house. Arthur told him that "mother wanted to move into the country." "Why what can you do in the country?" said he, "I should think that you had better stay where you are." I was afraid that Arther would say no more. So I told him that sister Grace was very ill indeed, that she pined for the grave-yard, because there were flowers and green leaves, and sunlight there, that mother thought if we could get her into the country she might come back to life again; for you see, sir," said I, "that poor folks like us cannot well afford to lose a sister." "No," said Arthur, speaking very loud, and looking at Mr. Coleman resolutely. "We shan't let our sister die,

Sir." "Not if it please God she shall live," replied Mr. Coleman, calmly; at which answer Arthur blushed, and hung his head. "Mother thinks that we ought to try and keep her, Sir," said I, feeling more than ever the importance of so doing. Mr. Coleman stood some minutes as though he was thinking, and then asked us "where we lived." I told him that we lived in "Thimble Alley, at the foot of Coal street." Then he asked me what number, which showed plainly that he had never been there; Thimble Alley had nothing to number, save the speck of a house, and the tall pump which seemed to be there just to keep the poor house company; for it had no water to spare. Mr. Coleman promised to call that evening, and we hastened home to tell mother; for it was a rare thing for any feet save our own to cross that narrow threshold. Mr. Coleman came rather late; but we were not sleepy. Arthur was wide awake with fear that we should make ourselves worse off; still he crept to the little



bed where Grace was sleeping uneasily, and stooping down, looked as though he felt that something must be done. Mr. Coleman said "that there was a house belonging to him in which he had himself lived, an old but a very good comfortable house. It was about twenty miles from the city, and we were welcome to live there as long as we pleased. It was, however, away from our work ; but perhaps we had other means of support." No,—he might have known that we had not ; who would live as we lived, unless they really were, or fancied themselves obliged to ? The God of Nature knows that we loved his works better than that ; and it seemed to us that poor sister Grace was actually dying of this love. But what were we to do ? Mother seemed to understand that our heavenly Father had not sent Mr. Coleman there merely to tell us that there was a house in the country, twenty miles away from our work where we might go and starve if we chose, so she said nothing, but gave him

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time to think, which he did, and then said, slowly, " Arthur makes shoes very well. This house is within half a mile of a very thriving village. Perhaps the boys can have a shop there, and work at their trade, I will see about it ma'am, I will write to an acquaintance there." Mother thanked him fervently, and he went away; Arthur was desponding. " To think," said he, " of boys like us taking a shop, and doing for ourselves!" but mother said " that it was wrong, almost, if not quite wicked to be so unbelieving;" and Arthur said no more, though I know that he slept but little that night.

## C H A P T E R V .

## C H A R I T Y .

*The Removal.—The Rural Home.—The House Plant.—The Full Cup.—Greatest of the Three.*

Endureth all things, and never faileth.

PETER said, "that he never could tell a plain story about moving into the country." Christopher, the curious boy, wanted to know what Mr. Coleman said when he received an answer to his letter, and was therein informed that the people at the village wanted some good shoemakers very much; that a shop was empty which the boys could have at once; Christopher wanted to know likewise what Peter's mother said; how Grace felt, &c., &c. But Peter replied, "I cannot tell you Christopher, any more than I could tell a beautiful dream which had taken a thou-

sand shapes before it had come to have a real one. There was talking in our house, all kinds of talk too; doubting, believing, hoping and fearing,—there were tears too, tears of despondency, tears of gratitude, and tears of love. But there were smiles also, and occasionally, (but not often), between Albert, Eva and myself, there was loud laughter. Arthur could tell you the whole story of our getting there, for every turn of the wheel wore a deeper track of care in his faithless little heart. “What wheels?” asked Christopher, “why the wheels of Mr. Coleman’s baggage wagon,” replied Peter, “for he was so kind as to send one of his men with his horses, and wagon with us, and we came to our new home just as the sun was going down behind the mountain, whose blue peak seemed far up in the sky. I never shall forget how Grace looked when she saw it. She was lying in mother’s arms, very weary indeed, when we came in sight of the mountain; then she started up and looked just as father did only a minute before he died. It

always appeared to me that father opened his spirit eyes then, and saw the 'far off country,' and the King in his beauty, we read about it in the Bible you know. Well, Grace looked very much so, and then she hid her face in mother's bosom again. But when we came to the house, almost hidden by the fine old trees, glorious in their June dress, and saw the sweet briar which had wreathed the portico with green leaves, and crimson blossoms, saw the honey-suckle clambering to the mossy roof, and the white and scarlet roses blending colors so beautifully, even mother's voice trembled as she said, "Grace, Grace, look up my darling, you will soon be well." Grace did look up, and tried to say that it was beautiful, glorious,—but she fell to crying. She was sick, you know, and weak; indeed some of the good people who came to help us unload, and set up our furniture, whispered to each other "that the poor child was homesick, and no wonder, coming as she did from the city, to live in that dull old place." But they did not understand

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her. She was too weak to bear such a weight of glory, and such a weight of gratitude too. So Grace told mother afterward, and even I felt enough to understand what that meant. It was weeks before this strange feeling passed away from me ; a feeling as if God was nearer than when we lived in Thimble Alley.

Mother hoped that Grace would sleep now. "In your clean airy chamber my dear child," said she, "how can you help sleeping?" But for several nights when mother went softly to her room, she found her wide awake. Then Grace would say that she was resting sweetly, that it was delicious to lie awake and see the shadow of the trees in the moonbeams upon the wall, and to hear them whisper at the open window as though they were never tired of prayer and praise. Grace never lost these solemn impressions of God in the works of Nature, though she soon became a healthy girl. Mr. Coleman came to see us, and bought Grace a cow, which was to be hers as long as she would do the milking. He

gave us boys a large garden spot, and made Grace promise to work there two hours each day; so if sister dreamed sometimes, they were not the dull, hopeless dreams of the poor house in the Alley,—so dull and hopeless that they could not stretch beyond the grave-yard. And perhaps the thoughts and feelings that we had then, ought not to be called *dreams*, for there is a ‘still small voice,’ in the rustling leaves, and in the song of birds; in the soft moonlight, and in the sweet bloom of the flowers. I do believe that God speaks to us in these things, but we have not always ears to hear; we had at this time, for it was so new to us, and so blessed withal, that we boys heard for a time, and felt God near, and then we ceased to listen, and, I fear forgot; but sister Grace never forgot. She learned from that time to know and to love the ‘still small voice.’ Faith, you know, was our beautiful house plant in Thimble Alley; and one would think that it might have grown to a cedar tree beneath the dew and sunshine of “Bloomdale;” but there is a

plant somewhere, of what flower-race I know not, which thrives best upon the bare rock. "It is called 'Aaron's rod,'" said Christopher. "*Moses'* rod were a better name," replied Peter, "for by that, wonders were performed in the desert; so it may well be likened to Faith. God knew too well the value of our house-plant to allow it to die in the midst of our milk and honey. We all had something to do beside dream. It is a sober reality, that, of keeping a family alive by means of bread, when every thing depends on such little hands, and so we found it; but if we were obliged to go upon our knees every day and say, "Our Father, give us this day our daily bread," it was something to believe as mother did, that it was all necessary to our faith; and so allow faith to grow stronger from this very necessity." "And your sister Grace became quite well," said Christopher. "Yes," replied Peter. "It was Hope, I think, that wrought the cure. Our sister had faith in us, and thought that she had faith in God, but we have since learned



that faith in Him, is never without hope. We all had great faith in Arthur, though he was so destitute of faith himself; but Christopher, let me tell you of mother's faith, for that was mighty, the very kind of faith which has subdued kingdoms; wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, escaped the edge of the sword; out of weakness has brought strength; and wrought other wonders of which the time would fail me to tell you. Even in Thimble Alley mother's faith saw God, and knew that he saw us, —saw *us* Christopher, as much as though there had been nobody in that full busy city save the poor toiling family in that dull old place. That kind of faith is the gift of God. It is freely bestowed on those who repent, forsake their sins, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; a very precious gift is this kind of faith, for by it we know God is our Father, and receive of Him the adoption of sons. It is very pleasant for a family, and especially for a poor family like ours, to have faith in each other; but

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you can see how in many ways such a faith might be left without foundation. But when we come to have faith in God, our house stands upon a rock, and the rains descend, and the floods beat, and the winds blow upon that house, and it *stands* ; for it is founded upon a rock. Such was mother's faith, and you see how it differed greatly from ours. Grace saw this difference first, and God made her partaker of like blessed faith, and with it came the hope, sure and steadfast ; and which entereth to that within the vail. Sister Grace soon became a useful member of the village church, and I have no doubt but that the sweet, holy influence of our lovely pious sister, was the savor of life to her brothers." " And did Arthur live long without faith, or hope, or any thing to cheer him," asked Christopher. " Sometime," replied Peter, " without either faith or hope, but not without something better, because it is more enduring. Arthur was glad to have his mother believing, because it made her happy. He was glad when Grace became hopeful, be-

cause he knew that hope was a sweet balm to a spirit like hers. I do not know why the poor boy found it so hard to hope, and believe for himself. It is true that our better fortune came slowly. Piece after piece of new furniture came at intervals from the cabinet shop in the village. Arthur thought that every piece would be the last, but somehow it seemed to take a fancy to our large airy rooms, and kept coming and coming, until they were all furnished. Sister Grace began by degrees, and soon had quite an extensive assortment of millinery, and fancy goods, in a shop near our own. Eva was a sprightly little creature, and when out of school, assisted Grace and mother by turns. We boys united in furnishing our house with every thing substantial; and as our means increased, made some advancement towards the elegant; but it was the pure chastened taste of our dear mother, and sister, that gave the finishing touch of beauty to every thing, and made our house so homelike,—a place that while life lasts we cannot cease to love.

After we had been settled in the country about five years, Mr. Coleman visited us again, and with a warmth quite unusual to him, said that it was delightful, and when he sat down to our table loaded with the good things of the present life, he seemed unable to ask any farther blessing, but with a trembling voice, and tearful eye thanked God that our cup of blessing was full." "And how did Arthur feel," asked Christopher, "when he saw all this?" "He felt," replied Peter, "that he had sinned so greatly in not trusting God before, that he had no right to trust him now. He said, that for many miserable years he had been without either Faith or Hope, but for his love of the right he should have been a thief; but for his love of mother, his brothers, and sisters, he should have been benumbed with despair." "Mother had Faith," said Arthur, "so had Albert, and Peter, and Grace has long since learned to hope, but for me, nothing has kept the breath of life, but *love*; nothing else, and may God forgive me."

Then mother threw her arms around the neck of her tallest boy, and smilingly said, "And now abideth Faith, Hope, and Charity, these three, but the *greatest* of these is Charity."

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### MY LITTLE SISTER.

I HAD once a little sister named Emma, and very much I loved her; indeed, she was a general favorite, being a kind, loving child.

She was very quick in learning, and knew many pretty hymns; and we had, at that time, a pious housekeeper, who would take my sister on her knee, and talk to her of God and heaven, and teach her verses from the Bible.

When about three years old, she had the measles, and then the whooping cough; but she was so patient and good, that it was quite a pleasure to be with her. It pleased God that she should recover from this illness, and be spared to us yet a little

longer. How glad we were when she was able to join us in our games as usual ! We all had little gardens of our own, and Emma used to plant many pretty flowers in hers, for she loved them very much ; and I remember her saying to me one day, "Set some flowers round my grave, sister, if I die first;" but I laughed then, little thinking how soon God would take her from us.

One day when we came home from school, Emma was seated in the parlor alone, surrounded by her playthings, and her doll's tea things before her. We asked the reason, and she said, "I am not well; and mother wishes me to be quiet, for my head pains me;" and then we noticed how hot her face looked, and her eyes were heavy. We stayed with her; but she did not play with us; yet now and then she smiled, and spoke a little. At last she said, "I had better go to bed, mother; please to hear my prayers, for my head is very bad." Then Emma knelt down, and said her prayers and her hymn, and then

the last text she had learned, which was, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not," &c. When she had finished, she lifted her eyes to her mother's face, and said, "No one will forbid me to go to Jesus, will they, dear mother? I often long to go. How happy we shall all be when we live with Jesus!" My little sister looked so happy whilst she said this, that I have thought since, she must have known how soon she was to be in that heaven she so loved to speak of.

That night I was awoke with a great noise in our sleeping room, and drawing aside the curtain, I saw father and mother, with others, round Emma's crib; and soon I heard that my dear sister was in a fit. But they took her from our room, bidding me pray for her; and I shall never forget the sad night I passed after this. The next morning we were taken very early to school, for my little sister was very ill; and we did not come home till late, and then were put quietly to bed. The next day we were all allowed to go in and take one look at poor Emma: but she was so altered;

her hair was all cut off, her eyes were closed, and her sweet face quite pale. We never saw her alive again, for that night she died; and so quietly did she pass from life, that it was not known for several minutes after.

The next time we saw our dear sister, was in her coffin; and she looked so peaceful and happy, that we could not cry, but looked from her to the bright blue sky, and wondered whether she saw us still, and if she was with Jesus.

But when she was taken from us altogether, we missed her sadly, and thought much on her words; praying to God to prepare us to go to that happy home where all is peace. My sister was only three years and a half old when she died. We are not too young to die. Reader, ask yourself, then, if you are prepared to die; and if your heart answers, "No," then pray to God to fit you, by his grace, for heaven. Death may come to you as suddenly as it did to this dear little one. Pray, then, that it may find you ready.



## EARLY RISING.

"Not yet, Ellen, oh! not yet—it is too soon—I shall be up by breakfast-time, and that will do, you know."—Poor Louise! She could not resolve to leave her soft pillow, even when she knew that she was doing wrong to indulge in so idle a habit. Just the evening before, she had been deploring the loss of time which it had occasioned her, and she had resolved to overcome it at once. Ellen promised to wake her very early the next morning, for she had a long lesson to learn before school. And besides, Ellen had told her of some beautiful flowers in a neighboring field, which she wished very much to gather. All this could be easily done before breakfast, if she could only keep her good resolution. But, alas! poor Louise. Her bad habit was too strong for her good resolutions, and while Ellen, with a light step,

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hastened to gather the bright flowers, and returned in good time with her cheeks as blooming as they, she was dozing on her pillow, and when at last she was tempted to rise, her pale cheeks and swollen eyes told a sad tale of wasted health and energy. After breakfast, she sat down yawning to her lessons, while the bright and cheerful Ellen, with health blooming on her cheek, and sparkling in her eye, easily accomplished her task, and throughout the day, felt, in the easy and cheerful performance of her duty, the healthful and invigorating effects of early rising.

## FAITH, HOPE, AND CHARITY.

The storm was high,  
The summer sky,  
    Was dark as winter's night,  
The heavens were bow'd,  
While cloud o'er cloud,  
    Roll'd upward in their might.

The seamen's bark,  
O'er waters dark,  
    Sped like a thing of life ;  
But fierce and rude,  
The storm pursued,  
    And keener grew the strife.

Faith walk'd the deck,  
And fear'd no wreck,  
    While Hope with eagle eye,  
Her night-watch kept,  
When storm-winds swept,  
    And wave o'er wave roll'd high.

The storm grew loud,  
Each quivering shroud,  
At last is rent in twain ;  
And floods o'erwhelm,  
The toiling helm,  
Which toils and strives in vain.

When Faith laid down,  
His shield and crown,  
And yielded to his fears ;  
Hope's eagle eye,  
That watch'd the sky,  
Grew dim with falling tears.

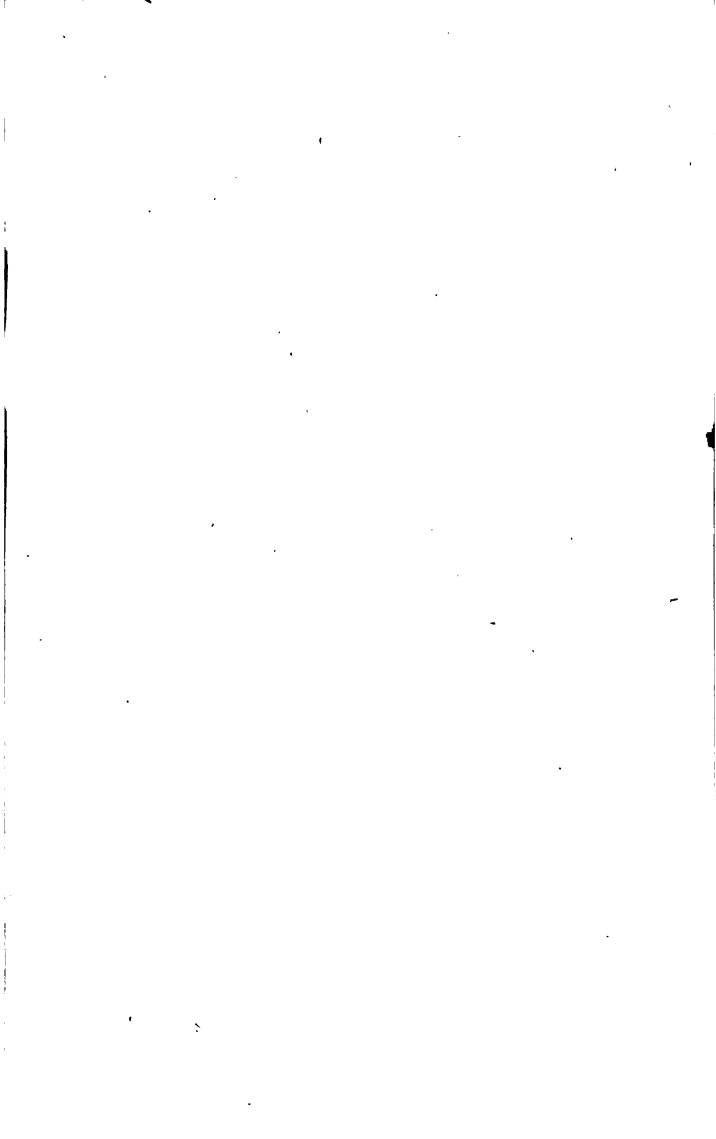
Then forth came Love,  
A timid Dove,  
Amid the howling blast ;  
And asked them why,  
When storms rose high ;  
Their *anchor* was not cast ?

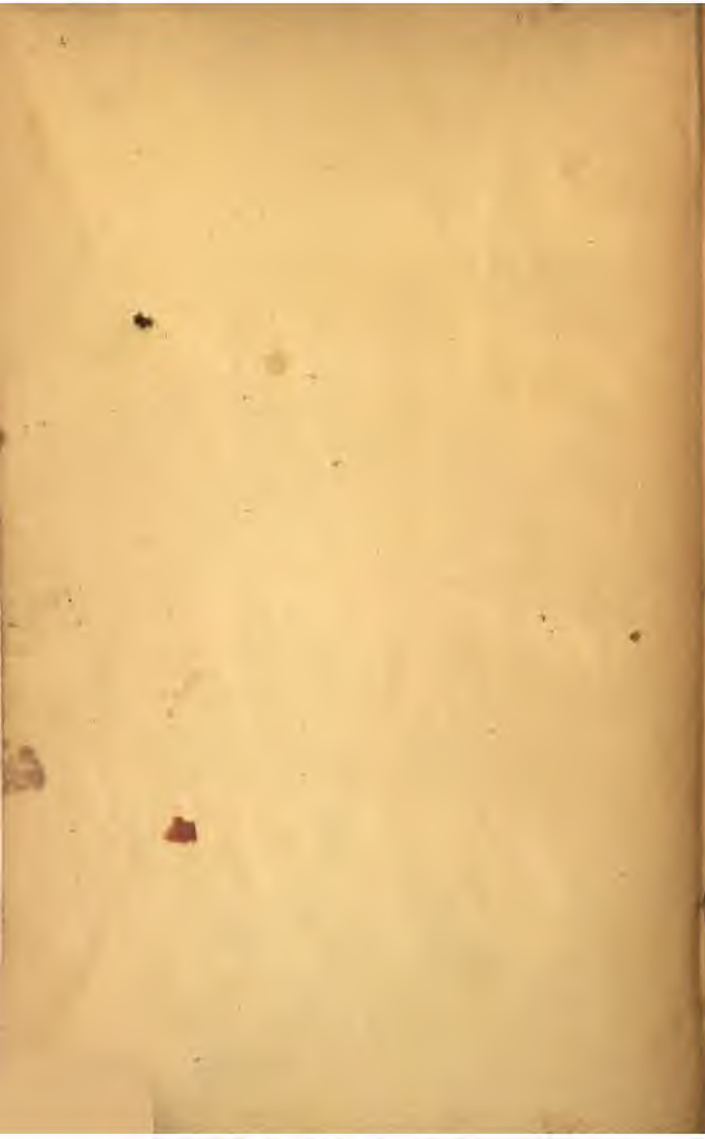
Faith spurn'd his fears,  
Hope dried her tears,  
And 'mid the tempest's wail ;  
The anchor flew,  
The waters through,  
And dropped within the vail.

The night was dark,  
And frail that bark,  
    With torn and fluttering sail ;  
But safe at last,  
With anchor cast,  
    The bark outrode the gale.

And now abide,  
Whate'er betide,  
    A Hope that points above ;  
But Hope and Faith,  
Most truly saith,  
    That greater still is Love.









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